SAM
OR
OUR CAT-TALES

C. LOUISE SCHAFFNER

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BY

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BY
C. LOUISE SCHAFFNER

To my dear MOTHER who taught me to love all of God's little dumb creatures, as she did, I dedicate this book with deepest love and gratitude.

C. Louise Schaffner

PREFACE

This little story or character sketch—if so dignified a name may be applied to so simple a narrative—of our latest pet, is absolutely true and accurate in every detail. The desire to write it and have it published was prompted by a threefold motive.

My first thought, as a friend and lover of children and animals, was to share with the many little boys and girls who have pets and love and understand them, the pleasure that this little creature was affording me and the members of my family. To some extent this object has already been accomplished. The manuscript was read and the original photographs shown to a large number of children and in each instance they were received with very evident pleasure and enthusiasm. The conclusion of the reading was always followed by requests from many of the listeners to "read it again," or by a spontaneous desire to tell about the pets at home.

As a teacher in the Chicago Public Schools, I wanted my little book to perform a much greater and more important mission than the one just mentioned. I aimed to reach the hearts of the children who do not love all of God's creatures, perhaps because they do not understand them. I felt that, if I could awaken a sympathy for and an interest in at least one small member of the animal kingdom, I might be laying the foundation for a kindliness that would grow and broaden so as to include and bless all mankind and make this world a better and happier

place for the future generation. Being heartily in favor of the law that makes the teaching of kindness to animals a part of the regular work in the schools of Illinois, and realizing the need of good reading matter with which to carry on the work, I tried to write something that would be a help to the teachers both as a story to be read to little children and as a supplementary reader to be placed in the hands of children who have mastered the first steps in the process of learning to read. Contrary to the opinion of many honest and thoughtful workers in this great field of reform, I do not believe that children can be taught kindness to animals by continually having presented to them mental pictures of cruelty and suffering. This is as self-evident to me as the fact that a student, desirous of learning the laws governing light, could not possibly accomplish his purpose by devoting most of his time and thought to the contemplation of darkness. I have therefore tried to emphasize the positive side and to show in as simple and direct a manner as possible, how happy and full of the joy of living a little dumb animal can be when it is properly cared for, and how much pleasure and satisfaction come with the possession of the love and confidence of such a pet.

As a member of the Anti-Cruelty Society of Chicago, my third motive was to make life a little pleasanter and easier for the many, poor, neglected kittens in the world, that are being tormented by thoughtless children and played with like inanimate playthings.

If this little book succeeds, even in a very small degree, in the realization of one or all of these aspirations, "Little Black Sambo" and the author of his "character sketch" will not have lived in vain.

C. Louise Schaffner.

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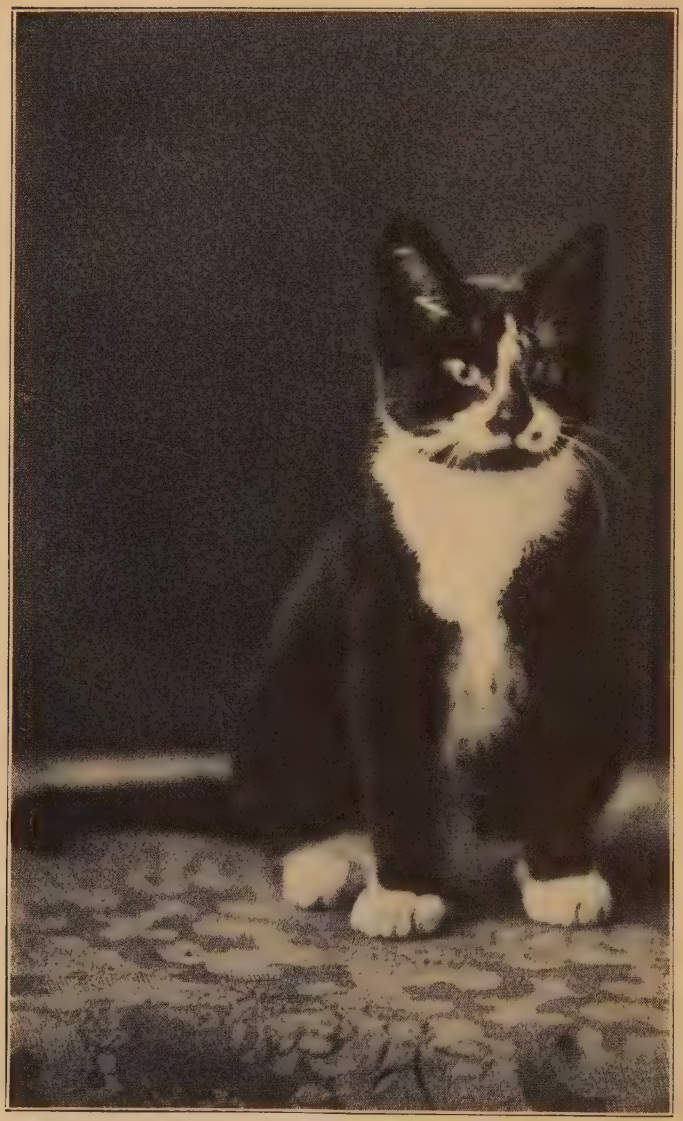

SAM

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CHAPTER I

SAM AND HOW HE CAME TO US

We call him Sam, but his whole name is "Little Black Sambo." If you have ever heard the story called "Little Black Sambo," you will know, as soon as you look at Sam's picture, just why we gave him that name. For those who have never heard the story, I will explain that it is about a little negro boy and his adventures in the Jungle.

This little boy, whose name was Sambo, was very, very

black. He wore a red coat, blue trousers, and purple shoes. His mother was called Black Mumbo and his father, Black Jumbo.

Instead of a red coat and two purple shoes, our Sambo wears a white vest and four little white shoes. But I am sure he is as black as any little colored boy could possibly be.

Whether his father and mother were called "Black Jumbo" and "Black Mumbo," like those of the little boy, I cannot say. He is a foundling, and we do not know where he came from. He has purred the story of his first home into my ears many times; but he tells it so softly

that I have never been able to understand him.

Sambo is such a bright, intelligent little cat that I thought you would like to know about him and hear some of the funny things he does.

In many ways he does not act like a cat at all, but seems more like a dog. He is so wide awake and interested in everything. He follows us around the house, and makes his wants known so plainly that we cannot help understanding just what he means. He listens to every sound and wants to find out where it comes from. If he could bark he would make a good watch dog. He is a wonderful cat.

But, I must tell you how he came to us.

One cool evening last summer, I was in the house reading. Suddenly our maid, Tillie, who had been sitting on a bench in the back yard, came running into the room in great excitement.

"Come out into the yard," she cried breathlessly, "and see what's in the corner by the fence!"

I got up at once and followed her. As it was getting dark, we stopped to light a candle, and Tillie explained that, while she was sitting near the house, a man came down the alley and stopped at our back fence.

The only description she could give of him, on account of the darkness, was, that he was tall, wore a straw hat, and carried a white bundle. He looked over the fence, she said, dropped the bundle and walked quickly away.

Then she heard a little, muffled cry. Not having the courage to go down and see what it was, she ran in and called me.

"It may be a baby," she said.

"We'll soon find out," I replied, leading the way with the candle.

By this time, my father and mother, having heard the excitement, had joined the procession. We tiptoed carefully

across the yard, not wishing to frighten whatever might be there. I held the candle close to the ground, and found, sitting demurely on the grass next to a white cloth, not a baby, but a little black and white kitten.

He was such a tiny mite of a kitten and looked so helpless, sitting there all alone in the dark, that my heart went out to him at once. I picked him up and held him close to me. He was not at all frightened, but cuddled up to my neck and began to purr.

"Poor little kitten! I don't see how anybody could do such a thing," exclaimed Tillie indignantly.

ADMIRING HIMSELF

"What shall we do with him?" asked my mother.

"The man evidently intended him for us," said I, "and as we have no pet, let's keep him."

Nobody seemed to have any objection, so the little stranger was adopted then and there. We took him into the kitchen, warmed some milk for him, made him a nice, soft bed in a peach basket, and left him to purr himself to sleep.

It certainly does seem heartless, to throw an innocent, helpless, baby kitten out into the big, cruel world, where there are so many boys that torment, and dogs that bite. However, in this case, it was fortunate

for the kitten, as he fell into kind and loving hands.

Perhaps the man knew that everybody in our family is fond of animals, and perhaps he knew that our last pet, a big tiger cat, named Tom, had disappeared a few months before. But whether he knew or not, we are much obliged to the tall man with the straw hat, for making us a present of the kitten, that has turned out to be the brightest, prettiest, and most affectionate cat, we have ever had.

CHAPTER II

HIS BATH

During the first day or two that Sam was with us, he succeeded in winning his way into the heart of every member of the family. He was such a pretty, dainty, little bundle of fur, and had such quiet, gentle ways that one simply couldn't help loving him. As he was very "cuddlesome" and spent so much of his time in sleep, we called him Snoozer. After a few weeks, however, he grew so lively that we thought the

name Sambo was more appropriate.

I am sorry I did not buy my kodak sooner, so that I could show you how he looked, when he was only a few weeks old. Now he is nearly full grown and he is not as pretty as he was when he was small. Still we think he is a very good looking cat. There seemed to be more white on him then, and, as his body was so tiny, his fur seemed longer. As he grew larger, the black parts seemed to do all the growing, and the white parts to shrink. It may be just as well, as it is hard work for him to keep the little white he has, nice and clean,

especially when he plays in the cellar in the coal.

This sport has been strictly forbidden; but he has very decided opinions of his own and watches every chance to slip down the back stairs. So it sometimes happens that a cat, which seems to be all black, comes up after an hour of exploring in the lower regions. At such times, if a good rubbing with a damp cloth does not repair the damage, he has to pay for his fun by having a bath.

He doesn't like this nearly as well as the romp in the coal-bin; but, considering that cats are supposed to dislike water very much, he really behaves

remarkably well. Some people think that cats should never be bathed—that it is not good for them. I have found that it does not hurt them at all. It does not even make them unhappy, when it is done the right way.

Would you like to know how I bathe Sam?

In the first place, I always select a nice, warm room in which to do it. Cats get cold very quickly and dislike it more than most other animals. This is really the secret of the whole matter. Don't let your kitty get cold while you are bathing him!

I have everything, that I am going to use, ready beforehand,

HUNG UP TO DRY

so that the whole bath doesn't last longer than five minutes. This hardly gives the cat time to think whether he likes it or not; and he is always sure to like the last part.

When everything is ready, I set him into a wash-bowl and rub a little warm soap-suds into his fur, being careful not to get any into his eyes. Then I put him into a larger bowl, or tub, of nice, warm water, and rinse him quickly but quietly, trying not to frighten him.

The first time I bathed him, he was only a few weeks old. I did not realize how very small he was, and how big a foot-bath-tub, full of water, would seem to him. Consequently,

when I held him in the rinsing water, he thought he was going to drown. He was so frightened, and cried and struggled so, that I had to take him in my arms, dripping wet, and hold him close to me to comfort him.

Now I know better and put just a little water into the tub, so that he can sit on the bottom and have the water come about half way up his body. He sits very still and lets me pour the water over his back. Next I put him into a large cloth, and rub him for a few minutes.

And now comes the part he likes best. Instead of letting him run into some corner and

get cold and dirty, before his fur has had a chance to get dry, I put him into a big, covered basket. In winter, I hang this over the radiator, high enough to keep him from getting too warm. On warm days in summer, I set the basket in the sun, and on cool days, I hang it over a small gas stove with the gas turned very low.

Just as soon as he feels the warm air coming through the basket, he begins to purr and to lick his ruffled fur into place. Then he goes to sleep and sleeps several hours until he is perfectly dry. When he comes out, his fur is so soft

and fluffy that he looks like an Angora cat.

He is always very lively after his bath, and is ready for a good dinner and then for a game of tag or hide-and-go-seek. Did you ever see a cat play hide-and-go-seek? I have seen dogs do it many times, but this is the first cat I have seen play that way.

When he feels like playing, he jumps up to us with his back arched, his tail up in the air, and the funniest look in his face, which means, "Come and play with me!"

If some one gets up to chase him, he runs as fast as he can and hides in some corner. When he is found, he cuts up

"CAN'T I COME OUT? I'M ALL DRY."

the most comical capers and runs and hides somewhere else.

If the person, who is playing with him, hides behind a door or a portiere, it is very funny to see how carefully he creeps along and peeks around the corners, until he finds the hiding place. He often gets so excited, at this point in the game, that he jumps up into the air, with all four feet at least a foot from the floor.

When he is in his playful moods, he keeps everybody in the house laughing.

His liveliest times are usually when we are all ready to go to bed, and want to put him into the kitchen for the night. It is almost impossible to catch

him at such times, and it often takes two or three people to corner him. He will stand still and look at me, until I get my hands almost on him, when away he goes into the next room, or up the stairs. Then he will turn around and look at me as if he were laughing at me.

He is full of mischief and doesn't like to go to bed, as long as there is a chance of having more fun.

I know some children that feel that way about going to bed, don't you?

CHAPTER III

WHAT HE EATS

Like all well-bred cats, or, perhaps I should say, "well-spoiled" cats, Sambo is very particular about his food.

I have read that, in catteries where fine Angora and Persian cats are raised, a different kind of food has to be given them every day or two, or they will not eat at all. If this is a sign of good breeding, Sam must come from a very aristocratic family. He will not eat the same kind of food more than

two or three times in succession.

No matter how well he likes a thing—as fish for example—he will not eat it, if it is offered him too many times. He will go up to his plate, smell of the food, jerk his head back, and go away, shaking his hind legs at it in disgust.

As he eats nearly everything that people eat, it is easy to let him have enough variety by giving him just what we have on the table ourselves. When I have finished my dinner, I cut up a saucerful for Sam and call him. He always comes as soon as he hears me, but he never hurries, or acts as if he were very eager for his food.

He walks slowly into the dining-room, with his little black tail straight up in the air, and goes right to his place on the rug in front of the sideboard.

Sometimes, if I am a little slower than usual, I find him sitting on the rug, looking at me with his big yellow eyes, saying as plainly as he can,

"Have you forgotten all about me?"

If he happens to be upstairs, when I call him to his dinner, he answers me in the softest, sweetest tones, like those a mother cat uses when she talks to her babies. This means,

"Here I am, upstairs, and I'll come just as fast as I can."

Then he comes thumping down the stairs. Although he is not a large cat, he is fat and heavy, and seems to enjoy making as much noise as possible. If you should hear him, I am sure you would think an animal two or three times his size, were coming down the stairs.

You don't know how pleasant it is to have a cat that will come, when you call him.

Our old Tom came, whenever he just happened to feel like coming, and that was, nearly always, when he wasn't being called. If he did not want to come, we could call and call, and he wouldn't even so much as turn his head.

But, when we call Sambo, he always comes to see what is wanted. He knows that it is worth his while. There is usually something pleasant in store for him—a romp, an airing in the back yard, or his dinner.

At times, he will answer from upstairs and then poke his head through the railing in the upper hall, looking down at me with an inquiring little face, as if he wanted to say,

"Is it really worth coming all the way down stairs for?"

If he sees me holding his plate, it doesn't take him long to decide to come down.

Whenever I am eating anything between meals, and Sam is near by, he comes up and

begs for some. He seldom makes a fuss, when he wants anything, but just sits in front of me and looks and looks. If this isn't enough to attract my attention, he puts his paws on my lap and tries to get at least a smell of what I am eating. When I give him a piece, he never gobbles it up, but eats it in the daintiest way, even if it is something he is very fond of.

He will eat olives, cake—especially macaroons — candy, chocolate, licorice, and even popcorn. I sometimes wonder whether he really cares for all of these things, or whether he eats them merely to be sociable.

There is one thing that I am sure he likes, and I think

you will agree with me that it is very queer food for cats. It is cucumbers.

Last summer, a few weeks after Sambo's arrival, I was busy in the kitchen one day, making a salad. While I was cutting the potato for it, he sat close to me on the floor, waiting for the pieces that I dropped to him every once in a while. When I had finished cutting the potato, I picked up a cucumber and began peeling it. Sam waited a few minutes for some more pieces to fall to his share, and then, getting somewhat impatient, jumped into my lap.

"No more potato, Sam; I am cutting cucumber now," I said

and pushed him onto the floor with my elbow.

He came right back and began smelling eagerly of the end of the cucumber.

"You wouldn't like that," I said.

And then, to prove to him that it was nothing he would eat, I cut off a piece and held it out to him. To my great surprise, he ate it and begged for more. Ever since then, there is no greater delicacy that we can give him, than a slice or two of cucumber, cut into small pieces.

One day, when my sister opened the ice-box to get something she wanted, Sambo happened to be there. Seeing a

"I WISH SOMEBODY WOULD CUT IT FOR ME."

piece of cucumber lying on the bottom, he quickly stuck his paw in, pulled the piece out and began licking it. He seemed to know that it had been saved for him, and that he had a perfect right to it.

Every night, before he goes to bed, he has a bowl of milk to drink. He doesn't care much for it unless it has been warmed. We spoiled him, you know, when he first came to us. Being just a baby kitten, he wasn't able to take anything but milk and only a little butter-plate-ful at a time. So we did what we could to coax him to eat.

The first thing Tillie did every morning, when she went down stairs, was to warm some milk

for the kitten. Of course, we didn't have to go on spoiling him; but, as we want him to be nice and plump, and have a pretty, glossy coat, we keep on warming his milk.

After he has emptied his bowl, I put him into his bed for the night. He has entirely outgrown his peach basket, and has a big bushel basket for his bed now. I put some cotton from an old quilt into it, during the winter, and I wish you could see how he enjoys it. I never knew before that cats like cotton so well. He cuddles up in it, takes a lump of cotton in his mouth, as a baby takes his rubber "comforter," and sings himself to sleep.

"IT TASTES SO GOOD."

CHAPTER IV

SAMBO HAS HIS PICTURE TAKEN

When Sambo was about three months old, Tillie left us to get married, and went to live in another city. She had become so attached to the kitten that she would like to have taken him with her; but I would not hear to this at all, because I was very fond of him myself.

When she found she could not have the cat, she asked that we have his picture taken and send her one. She said he looked just like a cat she

had, when she was a little girl in Sweden. We promised to send her the picture soon.

A few weeks after she left, I decided to take Sambo to a photographer near our house. That was before I bought my kodak and took pictures of him myself.

As I wanted him to look his best, I gave him a bath in the morning. I was careful not to let him get out of my sight for a moment, after he was dry, for fear he would get his little white vest and shoes dirty, before it was time to start.

In the afternoon, my sister and I carried him in his basket to the photographer. When it was time for him to pose for

his picture, we took him out and put him on the table, where he was supposed to sit. We expected, of course, that he would sit up like a gentlemanly, little cat, but he had no such intention.

This was the first time that he had been away from home, and he was anxious to see how things looked and smelled in this new place.

He is the most curious little creature I have ever seen. Nothing escapes his notice. When there is anything new in the house, he insists on investigating at once, and is not satisfied till he has seen it, smelled of it, and, if possible, crawled inside of it.

So, when he found himself in an entirely new place, he was determined to get down on the floor and begin exploring. He was not in the least frightened —just curious. My sister and I tried everything we could think of to coax him to sit up and have his picture taken, but he would not.

Finally, the photographer, a nice, gray-haired man, said, to my sister,

"You had better go into the other room. There are too many people here."

Then he said to me, "Now, you hold him in the position you want him, and, when I say, 'Ready!' let go of him at once."

I did as I was told. When he had the camera adjusted, he said, "Ready!" and grabbed a big Teddy Bear which, I suppose, he used to attract the attention of small children. He waved this frantically in the air, at the same time making a most peculiar, gurgling sound.

This took Sambo so by surprise that he sat up as if he had been turned into stone. Even his tail, which is the liveliest part of him, did not move at all.

I shall never forget how very funny it seemed to me to see the gray-haired man, waving the Teddy Bear and looking as if his life depended on getting the attention of that foolish

little cat. No doubt, Sam thought him the queerest acting person he had ever seen.

The result of all this was, that we got some excellent pictures. I have put them into this book. They are called "Sam," and "Wondering at the Teddy Bear."

A few months later, I bought a kodak and began taking pictures of Sam at home. I had great fun doing it, although it required much time and patience.

If you have ever tried to take an indoor picture of an animal, you know how difficult it is. To get a clear picture in an ordinary room, even with the best light that it is possible to

WONDERING AT THE TEDDY BEAR.

have, the film has to be exposed at least three or four seconds. That is a long time for a lively little creature to sit perfectly still, without turning his head or wiggling his nose, his ears, or his tail.

Often Sam would sit absolutely still for two or three seconds. Then, just as I thought I had a fine picture, his tail would begin to wag, or his ears to wiggle, and I had to begin all over again. Sometimes I spoiled a dozen films before I got one picture.

Some of the best pictures, I took when he hadn't the least notion that he was being photographed. If I saw him in a good position, I got my kodak

as quickly and quietly as I could, and took his picture, before he knew that I was paying any attention to him at all.

That is the way I took the picture called "Admiring Himself." A photographer, who saw it, said that it was a very unusual picture, and that I was very fortunate to get it. He said,

"You might have tried hundreds of times and not succeeded in getting such a clear reflection in the window-pane."

A number of pictures, that I wanted so much for this book, I could not get at all. Either the place, where he did the particular thing that I wanted

you to see, was too dark, or he would not do his little "stunt" when it was possible for me to take his picture. So I had to be satisfied with those that I could get.

Often I spent an hour or more getting him in position for a picture that I wanted. He usually felt like doing something else, just when I wanted him to pose. I had to think of all sorts of things with which to attract his attention, so that he would sit still long enough. Each time it had to be something new and interesting—a strange noise or some object he had never seen before. I always made at least a half a dozen exposures of the same

position, to be sure to have at least one good one. So you can see how many new things I had to think of.

The outdoor pictures were easier to get, because they could be snapshots. In the bright sunlight, a snapshot takes only one one-hundredth of a second. That is less time than it takes you to wink your eye. But even out of doors, I had my troubles. There was so much to distract Sambo, that it took considerable scheming to make him do what I wanted.

The pictures that show him smelling the cucumber and drinking his milk, were taken in the back yard in the sunshine. I

put a table in front of a screen and set Sam on the table.

It was easy enough to get him to smell the cucumber—he always likes to do that; but, when I wanted him to drink milk, he objected. He wasn't hungry and it wasn't the right time for drinking milk anyway. So why should he do it? That is probably what he thought. I put all sorts of things into the bowl, to tempt him to put his head in, for one one-hundredth of a second, at least. I tried milk, water, potato, meat, cucumber—everything I could think of. He only sniffed at the edge of the bowl, and then jumped down from the table to play in the grass.

I was almost ready to give up, when suddenly I thought of some catnip a friend had brought from the country for Sambo. The catnip won. In went Sam's head, snap went the kodak, and the picture was taken.

Not long ago, I heard a woman say that she wished she could take a picture of her cat. She said he was so afraid of the kodak, that he ran away and hid, whenever he saw it. I wondered why he did this.

Later I heard the same woman telling someone how severely she had whipped her cat for doing something she did not want him to do. After that, I did not wonder why she

could not take his picture. He was, probably, as much afraid of her as he was of the kodak.

I am so glad that Sam has not had any such experiences. He has perfect confidence in every member of the family, and is not afraid of anything we do, unless there is a very loud noise connected with it. He is interested in everything that goes on in the house and always comes right up to see what we are doing.

I do not see what pleasure anyone can possibly take in having a pet that is afraid of him.

CHAPTER V

HE HELPS WITH THE HOUSE-CLEANING

I hope Sam's curiosity will never get him into any more serious trouble than it has so far. I must tell you what he did, while we were cleaning house.

There were men papering and calcimining, and women cleaning, so it was thought best to keep Sam shut up in a room by himself. He usually objects to being left alone, and cries when he gets lonesome. But

all the strange people and loud noises frightened him. He was glad to get away from them and lie curled up in a shawl at the foot of the bed, or, in his favorite place, between the pillows.

I know, some people will think it very improper to allow a cat to sleep between the pillows. Perhaps it is; but, you see, that is another thing he learned when he was a tiny kitten.

Every evening after dinner, he used to come up to my room for a romp. I always had an old sheet on hand, to put on the bed, so that we could play without fear of mussing the spread. I assure you, we had

some fine times together. He found that the space between the pillows made a good hiding place, and often ended the games by going to sleep there. Of course, he isn't allowed this privilege if he has just been in the coal-bin.

Can you imagine how glad he was every evening, after the workmen had gone, to have the freedom of the house again?

I wish you could have seen him run up and down the stairs, through the rooms and halls, just for the fun of running. And then, it was amusing to see him go around, examining everything, sticking his little nose into every can and box the men had left, and

BETWEEN THE PILLOWS.

climbing around on their ladders and on the furniture that had been put into the middle of the rooms.

One day, shortly after the men had left, I heard Sam coming down the hall. As he passed my door, I was astonished to see how strange he looked. This time, he seemed to be an all white cat. I called him to me and picked him up. White dust flew in every direction. So I hurried him down to the back door and gave him a good brushing with a whisk-broom. Then I went to see what he had been doing.

The men had left a big box of plaster of Paris open on the floor, and, from the appearance

of the box, I could easily tell what had happened. Sam had been inside, throwing the plaster around with his paws, and probably rolling in it as well. All over the floor and down the stairs were little white foot prints, showing just where he had walked.

He must have thought it very kind of the men to leave that box uncovered, so that he might have some sport in it.

He seems to think that everything in the house was put there especially for him, and, as he has such a happy, confident, little way about him, nobody has the heart to punish him, or even scold him very severely. I suppose he will go

on doing just as he pleases with everything and everybody in the house.

Cleaning out closets and bureau drawers affords Sam great delight. He has to examine every object, no matter how small; and then, of course, he must crawl into every box and drawer, to see if it is clean enough to go back into its place.

One day my sister was cleaning out the cedar-chest and getting ready to put away the winter clothes. She found something she knew Sam would like, and gave it to him for his very own. I am sure you could never guess what it was. It was a nice, thick, bushy, gray, fur

tail that had been cut off of an old fur collar.

Sam has always been very fond of fur. In fact, all winter, we had to be very careful never to leave our furs on a chair or on the bed. If we forgot to put them away, as soon as we took them off, we usually found Sam rolling around on the floor with a muff or a fur collar. I suppose he felt as if he were playing with another cat.

When my sister gave him the tail, he was simply filled with joy. He hugged it close to him and rolled over and over on the floor. Then he threw it up into the air and jumped after it. When he was tired of this, he lay down and licked it and

licked it, for about half an hour. Finally he pushed it under his head with his paw and went to sleep with the tail for a pillow.

For days he didn't seem to care for any of his other playthings, but devoted himself entirely to his tail.

One day a friend came to visit us with her little, three-year-old daughter. The baby was very much interested in Sambo and also in Sambo's tail.

After the visitors had gone, the tail was nowhere to be found. We thought probably the child had liked it so well that she had taken it with her—and so it was.

A few days later the mother came to see us again. She brought the tail and told us what the baby had said. When they got into the car, the mother noticed, to her great surprise, that the little girl had the tail tightly clasped in her hand.

"You shouldn't have taken that with you," she explained to the child: "That's not your tail—that's the kitty's tail."

She said the little one looked at her with a serious, puzzled look, and said:

"No, that's not kitty's tail. Kitty's got his tail on."

She could not understand why one cat should need two tails.

CHAPTER VI

WHAT HE PLAYS WITH

All the boys and girls, that I know, like to play with water; but all the cats I have ever had anything to do with, wanted to get as far away from it as they possibly could. Whether Sambo lets me bathe him, because he likes water, or whether he likes water, because I have been bathing him, I do not know. But he certainly enjoys playing with it as much as any child.

He jumps up onto the wash-stand, or into the bath-tub,

and begs to have the water turned on. He looks at the faucet, then at me and back at the faucet. I understand this just as well as if he could say, "Please turn on the water!"

When the water is turned on, he gets down into the bowl and takes a long drink. He has a dish of water under the kitchen table, but he likes a cool, fresh drink from the faucet better.

After he has had his drink, he begins to play. He tries to catch the water with his paws as it comes out of the faucet. Then he tries to catch it as it goes down the waste-pipe. When he finds he cannot get hold of it at either place, he sits and looks at it, with the

"I WONDER WHERE IT GOES."

most puzzled expression in his face, evidently wondering why he cannot make it stop moving. He often keeps on playing till his head, neck, and paws are quite wet, which doesn't seem to bother him at all.

One of the most interesting things about Sambo is, that he enjoys music and all musical sounds.

Tom could not bear to hear any unusual noises. If some one played the piano, or whistled a tune, he would get up at once, put his ears back, and leave the room.

Sambo is quite different. We have a Japanese gong on a small table in the hall, near enough to the stairs for him to

reach it from one of the steps. He takes great pleasure in poking his paws through the balustrade and tapping the gong, until it swings hard enough to strike the metal bar from which it hangs. This, of course, makes it ring, and Sam sits and listens with his head on one side, enjoying the music.

Another sound that pleases him is the musical tinkle of the Japanese wind-bell. This, you know, is made of little pieces of glass hanging on strings. The slightest touch, or even a stir of air, will make them strike against each other. If Sam is held up so that he can reach them, he taps the pieces of glass gently, and then

turns his head from side to side, as he listens to the tinkle.

One evening, when he was very tiny, a neighbor's little boy came in to see our "kitty." As "kitty" did not happen to be in a playful mood and insisted on sleeping, we had to find something else with which to amuse our visitor. I got out a small music box and wound it up, much to the child's delight.

As soon as the kitten heard the music, he pricked up his ears, and it wasn't long before he was wide awake. He had never heard music before and wanted to find out more about that queer, little, black box, from which the sounds came.

I put the box down on the floor, and we all sat still to see what he would do.

He crawled up to it very cautiously. When he got as near as he dared, he gave the box a whack with his paw and jumped quickly away, to see if it would fight back. He did this several times, until he was sure it wasn't alive.

He was so pleased to find that it would not hurt him, and seemed to enjoy the music so, that he began dancing around the box and cutting up such funny capers that we all laughed out loud.

This embarrassed him and he ran out into the hall and hid. We kept still again, and, after

awhile, he came back and danced some more. This time he was funnier than before. He jumped up into the air, at times, and turned and twisted his mite of a body in such a comical way that we simply could not keep still; we shouted with laughter.

Whereupon, Sam was so offended that he hid in the hall again, and no amount of coaxing could make him dance any more.

The rattling of paper appeals to him too. Paper bags were his special delight, as long as he was small enough to get inside of them.

My sister would hold a paper bag open on the floor and

rattle it with her finger. This was an invitation he could not resist. He would come flying across the room, pounce into the bag, and then roll and wriggle around in it, making as much noise as possible.

When a parcel is unwrapped, he is always on hand to play with the paper. Once we opened a number of parcels in the kitchen and did not stop to fold up the papers at once, but put them in a pile on the floor. This made great sport for Sambo. He spent half an hour, or more, jumping in and out among the papers and rolling around on them.

If he can find a sheet of tissue-paper anywhere, he is

ASLEEP ON SOME TISSUE PAPER.

happy and often plays with it until it is torn into shreds. Sometimes, if he finds some tissue-paper and does not care to play with it just then, he lies down on it and goes to sleep, hugging it in his paws.

A friend of ours, who likes cats as well as we do, brought Sambo a catnip ball, and he has some lively times with that.

There is a large room on the third floor of our house, that has a smooth, hardwood floor and no rugs to get in the way. This is a fine place for him to play with his ball. He will roll it around and chase after it, until he is tired out.

He thinks it is fun to slide on the smooth floor and some-

times does exactly what you would do—runs and slides, just for the sake of sliding.

He likes to play with a string. The other evening, I took a thick string with a knot at the end of it, and played with him for a few minutes, letting him jump for the knot. Then I dropped the string and turned to go on with my work.

No sooner had I dropped it, than Sam grabbed the knot with his teeth and tore madly down the two flights of stairs, going thump, thump, all the way. He carried the string proudly down to the rest of the family as if he wanted to say,

"I got it away from her at last."

One of his favorite playthings is a hatpin with a black head. He runs after the little black ball with as much enthusiasm as he would if it were a little black fly. I think that is why he likes hatpins,—they remind him of the flies he chased last summer.

If he sees my hat lying on the bed, he jumps up and asks me to take out the hatpin and play with him. He asks by sitting close to it, looking at it, and then at me. If I don't take it out for him, he tries to do it himself with his teeth.

Whenever he hears the little, clicking sound that hatpins

make as they strike against each other, he comes running up at once, expecting to have a frolic.

On a table in the corner of the sitting-room, is a little metal tray on which Sam's playthings are kept. Would you like to know what his playthings are? I have already told you about some of them. The collection consists of his catnip ball, a ping-pong ball, — he likes this especially well because it rolls so easily — a string, a stump of a pencil, some little hazelnuts, a spool, his fur tail, and a little roll of leather that I will tell you about in the next chapter.

Sometimes, when he feels like playing, he jumps up on the table and sits in front of the tray, looking at his playthings until he decides which one he wants. Then he carefully hooks it out with his claws, carries it to some member of the family, and invites him to play.

The first time he did this, we were very much surprised, as we did not know that he had ever seen the tray. Now I feel sure there is scarcely anything in the house that he has not seen.

He is always on the lookout for something new, and certainly finds about as many ways of "having fun" as children do. Don't you think so?

CHAPTER VII

HIS FAVORITE PLACES

At first our little "Snoozer" was never quite happy, unless he was close to somebody. I think he felt lonesome and wanted his mamma. He spent most of his time on my shoulder, or in my apron pocket, or on my father's arm, where he would lie for hours, peacefully sleeping, while my father read his papers.

He has grown more independent since then, and doesn't care to be held when he sleeps.

He prefers, for his afternoon nap, to lie on a rug in front of the radiator, or in the best parlor chairs.

Small, cozy places appeal to him, and he will try to crawl into every basket, box, or jardinière, that he can find and curl up in it. Often the thing he is trying to get into is so small that he has to turn and twist and squeeze himself into a little ball, in order to get in. The tighter the squeeze, the better he likes it.

He kept us all laughing one evening, by trying again and again to get inside of a jardinière that was much too small to hold him. He evidently did not realize this, and was deter-

mined to get in. Several times he got stuck and had to be pulled out; but still he kept on trying.

Nothing suits him quite so well as a hat-box with tissue-paper in it. If I leave mine open anywhere within his reach, I am apt to find a roll of fur in it, when I want to put away my hat.

One morning my mother was going to use the chopping-bowl and she set it on the kitchen table. Sambo was sitting quietly on the window-sill, near the table, watching her. She went to the other side of the room to get the meat she wanted to chop, and, when she came back to put it into the

A TIGHT SQUEEZE.

bowl, she found it already filled with black and white fur. Sam was all fixed for a nap.

We are trying to teach him that there are a few places in the house that were not made for him. I think, perhaps, in time, he will learn that he must keep off of the kitchen table, the dining-room table, the parlor mantle, and out of a few other places.

For a long time my mother's desk, which stands near a window, was his favorite place. He would sit on it for hours, looking out of the window, or lie curled up on the books and papers. Sometimes, when my mother was reading or writing, he would sit and watch her

for a while, then put his front paws and his head upon her shoulder, and go to sleep.

He liked to play with her pencils, and was never satisfied, unless he could push one down and roll it around on the floor.

Something happened one day, that my mother did not like very well, and ever since then, Sam is allowed on the desk only when someone is there to watch him. We have had dogs that needed watching, because they wanted to chew everything; but we did not suppose that a kitten could have such bad habits.

My mother was very much surprised to find that the cor-

ner of one of her best books had been chewed. It plainly bore the marks of sharp teeth on the leather binding.

We did not want to punish him, as he probably would not have understood the reason for it, and it only would have made him afraid of us. So we decided that the desk had better be kept closed, when it was not being used, even if Sam did want to sleep on it.

Anything made of leather tempts him to use his little, needle-like teeth,—gloves, purses, and handbags being most attractive. We thought, perhaps if he had some leather of his own to chew, he would let our things alone. So I found a

little piece that I did not want, and rolled it up to about the size of a pencil. I tied a string to it and gave it to him for his very own plaything.

You should see how much fun he has with it. He rolls around on the floor, hugging it, and sits and chews and chews to his heart's content. Since then he has not touched any of our things.

I haven't told you how he makes a tunnel of a rug. He starts by poking his paws under the rug. Then he sticks his head under, and finally manages to make his whole body disappear. He wiggles around and pushes the rug up with his back, until it stays up in

the middle, like a tunnel, with an opening at each end.

Then the frolic begins. He runs in and out, and carries his playthings—a pencil, a spool, his roll of leather, or his tail—down into the tunnel. There he rolls around with them, having the best kind of a time, all by himself.

Sambo does not like visitors and usually stays at a safe distance while they are in the house. He does not trust anybody, except the members of the family and a few people who come often enough for him to know them.

When we have callers, his favorite place is a step on the stairs, that is high enough to

make him feel safe, and yet gives him a good view of the parlor. He doesn't want to miss anything.

There he will lie, with his little white paws hanging down, looking intently at the visitors. When they are ready to go, he will lean over, as far as he can, and watch them till he is sure they are out of the house. Then he comes down.

Like all people, great and small, Sam likes to look out of the window. He has no particular window, but tries them all in turn.

During the winter, he spent much of his time sitting on the window-sill, sunning himself, or watching the sparrows. He

LOOKING OUT OF THE WINDOW.

is also interested in watching the people, the dogs and cats, and other things that one sees on the street.

He enjoys looking out of the window as much after dark as in the day time, and it annoys him greatly to have all the shades pulled down. He goes from one window to another and tries to get between the shade and the window. If he doesn't succeed in doing this, he bumps the shade with his head and then looks at us. This means—

"Do raise that shade!"

And it doesn't look as if he were saying "please" either.

Occasionally, I raise the shade just a few inches, but this does

not satisfy him. He will keep on bumping the end of the shade, till I raise it high enough for him to sit up comfortably and look out.

Once, when he was on the window-sill, trying to look out, I raised the shade for a moment, to look at the weather, and pulled it right down again. We did not want that particular shade up.

I had taken hold of the cord close to the little ring that fastens it to the shade. Imagine my surprise, when, as soon as the shade was down again, Sambo took the ring in his mouth and gave the shade a little jerk. Then he sat and looked at it, surprised that it

did not go up for him as it had for me.

All of his favorite spots and all of his indoor amusements are fast losing their charm. As the spring days grow brighter and warmer, he doesn't seem to care to do anything but go out into the yard to play. He takes us to the back door a dozen times a day, puts his paws up to the knob, and cries.

So far, we have never let him go out by himself. There has always been someone near by, to see that he does not go over the fence, or get into trouble. We do not want to lose him, or have him become an ill-mannered, alley cat.

CHAPTER VIII

OUT OF DOORS

Sambo enjoys going out into the yard so much that even the rain doesn't keep him in. I think he really likes the rain, for he sometimes stays out in it till he is all wet, and has to be dried with a cloth.

The first time that he was out in the rain, it was comical to see how surprised he looked. He tried to catch the drops, as they fell around him, jumping from one drop to another, on the walk. Then, as he

felt some on his back, he looked to see where they were coming from. The wonder on his little face was very funny, as he looked up and saw so many drops coming down at once.

His first experience with the snow was just as funny. It had snowed hard during the night, and, when we opened the door to let him out in the morning, he stood and looked in astonishment to see that everything was white with snow.

He stepped into it very carefully, not knowing what it was. As soon as he found that it was nice and soft, he began jumping from one place to another, throwing the snow around with his paws.

He had as much fun as children have in the first snow. In about ten minutes, the yard looked as if a half a dozen cats had been chasing each other, instead of one little cat playing by himself.

Catching bugs, flies, and moths was fine sport for Sam in the summer time, and he did it as long as there was one left to catch. I have often seen him run wildly around the yard, and dart up into the air after an insect that was so tiny I could not see it at all.

When the insects were all gone, he ran after the birds, but they were too quick for him. He never seemed to get discouraged, but kept on watch-

WATCHING THE BIRDS.

ing them and running after them, whenever he had a chance.

I hope he will learn, before next summer, that catching birds is a very naughty thing for a well-brought-up cat to do. There is no excuse for it, when a cat gets enough to eat in the house. Perhaps he doesn't really want to catch them, but takes pleasure in seeing them fly up into the bushes and trees.

They usually fly into a lilac bush that stands near one of the hammock posts. It was a great event in Sam's life, when he found that he could climb to the top of this post, and so get a little nearer the birds, as he thought. But, of course,

when he sat there, they flew up into the tree, and he had to stretch his neck to see them.

After he had learned to climb the post, he found that the top of it was just a little beyond our reach, and that, when he sat there, we could not get hold of him to take him in. He is never ready to come in when we want him. Every time he thought we were trying to catch him, he would fly to the hammock post, climb quickly to the top, and look down at us with a saucy little face, that said plainly,

"I shall stay here just as long as I want to."

He soon found out, though, that this wasn't as fine a

scheme as he had thought. When he was ready to come down, there wasn't always somebody ready to help him, and he could not get down alone. He was afraid to come down forwards and hadn't learned how to turn around and come down backwards.

So it often happened that nobody saw that he was ready, and he had to stay till he got colder than he cared to be. At such times, when someone finally came, he was very glad and put his front paws way down the post, as far as possible, to be sure that we could reach him. Sometimes he fairly jumped into our arms.

He doesn't know how to climb a tree either. At least, he doesn't know how to get down, after he gets up. He has a number of things to learn.

The first time he climbed a tree, it was because he was frightened. An unusually loud noise in the alley startled him, and up he went, as high as the first big branch.

He soon got over his fright and wanted to come down. He tried several times to come down forwards and couldn't. Then he turned around, and we thought that, at last, he had learned the trick of coming down. To our surprise, instead of coming down, he went still further up, to the next big

WON'T SOMEBODY COME AND GET ME?

branch. He tried going as near to the end of that branch as he could. This only made matters worse, because then he was afraid to turn around, as the branch was so thin.

He looked down at us and cried pitifully, as if he wanted to say,

"Can't you help me?"

My little cousin, Don, was visiting us that day, and he suggested that he climb up after him. I knew he could not get out far enough on the branch, to reach the cat, and would only frighten him more.

"We shall have to think of some other way," I said.

I remembered, when I was a child, a kitten, that I loved

very dearly, got into trouble the same way, and kept us awake one whole night with his cries. We finally had to ask a man to climb the tree and get him down for us.

While I was thinking of this and was wondering if we could reach Sam with a ladder, Don had a very happy thought. He said,

"Let's nail his basket to a long stick and hold it up to him. Maybe he'll get into it."

This struck me as being a very good idea.

We went in and got a long clothes pole, Sam's peach basket, a hammer, and some nails. In a few minutes, Don had the elevator ready.

We hoisted it up to the branch, where the frightened little cat sat crying, and held it as still as we could. He sat right up and looked at it. Seeing that it was his own little bed and his own little cushion in it, he knew it must be all right. In a moment more, he was sitting calmly in his basket, ready to have the elevator take him down to the main floor.

We have had to use the elevator several times since then, but we are hoping that he will soon learn to get down by himself.

Sambo gave us quite a scare one afternoon. My sister had been in the yard with him and

had left him alone for a few moments, while she went to get something in the kitchen. The back door was open, so that he could run in if he wanted to. Having been out so little, he is timid and likes to run in, when a noise startles him.

When she went out again to see what he was doing, he was nowhere in sight. She looked all around the yard and called and called, but he did not come. Then she came in and looked in the entry-way, where the ice-box stands, and in the kitchen, but could not see him there either.

We looked all over the house, calling in our most coaxing

SAM'S ELEVATOR.

tones. There was no little cooing answer and no little black and white face, peeping at us through the railing of the stairs. Where could he be?

We decided that he must have jumped over the fence, although he had never done such a thing before. We went into the neighbor's yards and down the alley calling, "Kitty! Kitty! Kitty!" But no "Kitty" came.

By this time, the whole family had joined in the search. I was just going back to the house, wondering where I could look next, when, to my great relief, I saw another sister, standing in the door with Sambo in her arms.

Where do you think she had found him? Under the ice-box! Something had scared him so that he had crawled away back into the corner, and was too frightened to come out when he was called. He had to be pulled out. I don't know what frightened him, but it must have been something terrible, for it took him some time to get over it.

We were all very glad indeed, that Sambo was found, for we should miss him dreadfully, if he were gone. He is such a happy, jolly, little fellow, and gives us so much pleasure and amusement, in return for the trouble we take in caring for him, that we all want to thank

the tall man, once more, for giving him to us.

If you haven't a kitten of your own, and are wishing for one, I sincerely hope that, some day, a man will come to your back fence, and leave a kitten for you, that you will like as well as we do our

"Little Black Sambo."

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